

Rt Hon Patrick McLoughlin MP
Secretary of State for Transport
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

11 November 2013

Dear Patrick

Southern Rail's bid for Access for All funding for Battersea Park station

I am writing in support of Southern Rail's bid for funding from the Access for All Programme, to install a lift at Battersea Park station in my constituency.

Battersea Park station is used by many of my constituents and is on a key commuter route to and from London Victoria. There is an average of 10 trains per hour during peak times and, last year, over 2 million journeys were made from the station. In spite of its popularity, access to and from the platforms has been a problem for many years. There are steep steps leading to the platforms, which are consequently unusable by infirm or physically disabled passengers. Further, the stairs are a real obstacle to those with pushchairs or luggage.

There are 5,122 people in the Battersea constituency who are registered with limiting long-term physical conditions in my constituency, and a further 5,792 who have a physical condition which limits their mobility and day-to-day activities. Taken together, this represents around a tenth of the electorate in my constituency who may be unable to use a busy main line station on an important commuter route to central London through no fault of their own, as a result of inadequate access facilities. I have corresponded with a number of elderly constituents and those with mobility problems who live close to the station and who would like to use it, but who are unable to because of the steep staircase.

However, access problems at Battersea Park are not only limited to the physically disabled and the infirm. Battersea is an area with a high proportion of young families; indeed, my constituency has the highest proportion of 25–44 year olds in the country – almost 50 per cent. The London average is 35 per cent. It also has the third highest birth rate in the capital. I have met with members of staff at Battersea Park station who inform me that they frequently have to assist parents with pushchairs up and down the steps to and from the platforms, something I have also witnessed. The installation of a lift would, therefore, also be beneficial in this respect.

Various schemes have been examined previously to assess the possibility of improving access at the station, but none have been brought to fruition. Although the station is Grade II listed, I am told by Southern experts that a lift to at least two of the platforms is feasible. In the light of this, I would like to express my strong support for Southern Rail's bid for funding from the Access for All Programme for the installation of a lift at Battersea Park station.

I would be most grateful for an acknowledgement of receipt of this letter.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Jane Ellison

Member of Parliament for Battersea, Balham & Wandsworth